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Kennan

PRESS AND RADIO NEWS CONFERENCE, TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1952
3:30 P.M., EST

MR. McDERMOTT: Ladies and Gentlemen, Ambassador Kennan has consented by request to speak to us this afternoon instead of tomorrow afternoon because we pointed out to him we have the Queen arriving tomorrow and so he is taking time out to do what we have planned for tomorrow. He has a public statement which he can be quoted on. We don't have that up here as yet. He can tell you what is in it, but please remember that that is the only thing which can be quoted or is to be attributed to him. Everything else is background in the sense it is not to be attributed to him, to the Government, to any State Department official. They are his thoughts but he is willing you should use them as your own if you want, but you must be sure they are not attributed as government thinking. He has been away for some time and feels a little out of touch with the Department, but nevertheless he is willing to meet with us and give us the benefit of such views as he has. I knew you wanted that. With that understanding we can get under way.

Ambassador George Kennan, will you tell us what's in the statement, roughly?

Q. Is the statement to be released today?

MR. McDERMOTT: No. Everything that transpires in this room, including the statement, is to be released at noon tomorrow.

AMBASSADOR KENNAN: And not everything is for release. Well, I can tell you, if you want, substantially what the

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statement is. It is simply this, that I have very little to say at the present time; that, as everyone knows, the President has appointed me Ambassador to Moscow. I have come down here to Washington to take the oath of office and get ready for the new job. I expect to leave for Moscow in the latter part of this month. My job there, as I see it, will be to implement the policies of the United States Government within the field of responsibility that is given to me. The Embassy in Moscow is only a small part of the machinery for the implementation of our foreign policy and it can be effective only to the extent that that is borne in mind and that the Ambassador there functions as a member of a team and not just as an individual.

The possibilities for service at that post are going to depend, as I think they do with any diplomatic mission, largely on circumstances; and it's impossible to foresee them today. I will be personally happy if the work out there gives me an opportunity to contribute to a relaxation of existing tensions and to an improvement of the international atmosphere. It seems to me that both of those objectives are obviously and urgently desirable and I can see no reason why they should not be within the realm of possibility if the desire is shared on the other side. That is substantially the statement.

MR. McDERMOTT: We, from here on, better proceed with questions.

Q. Mr. Ambassador, how much chance do you think there is that the desire will be shared on the other side?

A. I think there is a good chance that the Soviet leaders would prefer a less tense atmosphere than we have

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today, one that would be outwardly at least somewhat more normal and more relaxed. And it seems to me there have been a number of indications of that in recent times. I don't say that there have not been things that could be interpreted as contrary indications too, and by that I don't mean I think the Soviet Government is prepared at this time to relinquish easily any of the purposes or undertakings that they have been behind which have caused us trouble, but I do mean that I think they show signs of finding the present tension not entirely desirable from their side, as indeed I don't think it's desirable from ours.

Let me expatiate on that to this extent, there is no use under-rating the difficulty and, if you will, the dangerousness and the depth of our problems with the Soviet Union. They are honeys, some of them even grow into the stature of what I think you can call dilemmas. There appears to be no neat or simple solution to them from anybody's standpoint. Those things are not going to be solved at any one time or in any one way, particularly not at any single early moment. It's going to take a long time in the best of circumstances to straighten out the real problems themselves. And obviously that will not depend on the Ambassador at Moscow.

These problems are problems today and are as bitter as they are not because there is something that somebody forgot to say to the Russians who has been stationed over there before or because somebody didn't give the right gladhand or because the other Ambassadors didn't speak Russian

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or things of that sort. The roots of these problems go far deeper than that and they go into the deepest sort of political and strategic interests and it's going to take a long long time and a great deal of patience to straighten them out. Some of them, I think, are always going to be with us in our time in one form or another. However, I don't think that the present degree of tension that hovers over our relations is in anybody's interest.

I can perfectly well see that Korea makes a great deal of it necessary and unless and until there is some cessation of hostilities there you're bound to have a very tense situation and I don't propose to correct that unless there is a cessation of hostilities. But perhaps things can be done in the way of a certain easing of the atmosphere and a recovery of a more normal, let us say, tone of communication between our governments. If so, I would be very happy to contribute to it. It seems to me obviously desirable, as I have said.

Q. Mr. Ambassador, how would you define the major bases for a settlement?

A. You know, I don't think I would be able to speak of a settlement.

Q. Or relaxation?

A. Yes. I would hope, let's say as one basis, that there might with time be a certain quieting down of the outward evidences of the commitment and feeling on both sides. You see, I'm one of the people who served there, as you know, in the period before World War II and I can remember days

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when there was already a Soviet Government and very much the same government that we know today, and many of these same phenomena were present and yet there was a great deal less of nervousness and things were not quite as difficult as they are today.

Now, I don't mean to say that the past can be restored entirely. I realize that it can't. The differences today over Germany are new ones which we didn't have in their entirety in the '30's, although some of them were present even in rudimentary ways. But I think the first thing is to recapture a certain outward normality of diplomatic intercourse than to achieve a situation again in which it is not necessarily news. If you have a meal with a Soviet diplomat or somebody talks to so and so and that sort of thing, it seems to me that would be obviously desirable.

As far as the substantive issues are concerned, I don't think there is anything I can say to you that the responsible officials here of the Department haven't said and can't say. I haven't been around here for a year and a half. I think that Mr. Acheson, once in a speech out there on the West Coast, defined in what seemed to me a very admirable way the things that we really want out of the Soviet Government. They are not all things about which you can sit down and write out an agreement. Many of them are changes in attitude and changes in behavior which don't come really pursuant to the provision of a written agreement but come because people have finally come to the conclusion that perhaps it's more desirable in their own interests to bring about such changes. And I hope that time will come with the Soviet Government.

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It seems to me that any government which is as secretive, as conspiratorial as this one is, in its dealings with other people, any government which rigidly does bar its people from any association with foreigners, is already presenting rather severe handicaps in the way of its own international relations. I would hope that with the course of time some of that really, it seems to me, pathological fear of the individual foreigner would pass in Russia. There is, it's true, a long tradition of that in Russian history but there have always been periods in Russian history when it was not that way and we would hope that perhaps some of that would wear off.

There are, of course, the great specific issues which are those of the treatment of the defeated enemies in the recent war. And on those I really cannot say anything to you that you have not heard from the Department of State. They are the fellows who have been conducting policy or rather advising the President on it, and the responsible statements they have made have to stand.

Q. Do you think of withdrawal of Soviet forces to the 39 frontiers as a basis for an easing, Mr. Ambassador?

A. To the present frontiers of the Soviet Union, you mean?

Q. To the 39 frontiers, a withdrawal from their present situation.

A. Well, that would involve actually the Soviet Government giving up territory which today it considers that it has in full title. And I don't think I can make any comment at all on such a suggestion. There has been no such suggestion, as far as I'm aware, on the part of anyone in this government, and it would be a very very far reaching thing.

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Q. Mr. Kennan, I think you indicated there have been some signs of an easing off of the tensions. Do you consider the march on the German Peace Treaty and even more recently Stalin answered the questions of a group of editors who were sort of touring Europe, as tending in that direction?

A. Well, those are two quite different things. And I would have to speak individually of each of them. As far as the questions are concerned, I don't think that one can give them any great significance from that standpoint. They are, like previous answers to similar questions, extremely cryptic, cryptic to the point where their meaning could be almost anything. I ask you to look quickly at those questions and answers yourselves and to try to figure out what they mean.

As I recall it, the first one was whether the danger of war is any greater or whether war is nearer than it was two or three years ago. Well, before I can answer that question I would want to know in the first place, are you speaking of two years ago or three years ago. Three years ago there was a Berlin blockade on and there was a very considerable tension in the atmosphere, two years ago a good deal less.

Another thing is that that statement is meaningless unless you know how Stalin rated the danger of war two or three years ago. He could have rated it very high at that time, in which case he would still be rating it high. Or he could have rated it very low, in which case he would still be rating it low.

And, as you go through these questions, I think you find the same inadequacy really as responsible statements of the view he has said, that a meeting of the Heads of States could possibly be beneficial. Beneficial from whose standpoint? Beneficial from what purposes? Everything can

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depend on how you answer that question. The answer can mean one thing or another, depending on how you fill in that blank. So that I don't really see much in these answers which I think you can attach any direct value to as sort of frank and explicit evidences of Soviet attitudes.

There is surely an importance in the fact that the answers to these questions were forthcoming just at this time. That is, somebody there must have scratched his head and asked himself, "Is it wise that we should give answers to statements of this nature precisely on April 1, 1952?" and answered that question in the affirmative and there must have been some reason for that.

Q. April Fool's Day.

A. Well, that is your comment on this. But as for the other thing, again numerous motives could be involved in it and not necessarily as alternatives. They could all be there. And very often I think one of the difficulties people have had in needlessly trying to interpret Soviet actions and moves is that they have searched for some one motive which to the exclusion of the others might explain such a move. I think it has been our general conclusion that the men in the Kremlin think things over very carefully. They have a great many irons in the fire. Many problems appear to them in a multiplicity of aspects as they do to us and many times in foreign policy, any single major move in foreign policy. In the case of Germany, I should think what they could have been more interested in in this case would have been what is happening in the arrangements between Germany and the Western countries, particularly with relation to the possibility of Western German rearmament within some framework of association with the Western Powers.

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creditable way, it will be exploited propagandistically for political purposes and the suggestion will be advanced through the Soviet propaganda machine and its supporting machines in other countries that here the United States is concentrating on military affairs, talking about war, asking for bases, rearming other people; whereas we in Moscow are the reasonable people who want to get trade going again, who want to have peaceful conditions in the world, we aren't thinking about war, we are thinking about economic exchanges, etc. That will be exploited to the utmost and will be there too. But that doesn't necessarily exclude the possibility that these men might really have come to the conclusion too that it would be better from their standpoint if things were a little more open in this coming period, not quite so tight all around if there could be a little more coming and going between the two worlds and a little more talk of trade.

Q. Well, then, Ambassador Kennan, would you agree entirely with Secretary Acheson's statement on that conference which labeled it completely as a propagandistic move seeking to get reputable Americans to lend their names to Soviet propaganda purposes?

A. I think that was certainly all there, and that the presence of any Americans there would be exploited for precisely the purposes that I have given here. I'm merely saying that there are times when both sides can consider it desirable, that an atmosphere be less tense, each from his

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own motives and yet perhaps both can come to that conclusion and perhaps it is really desirable.

Q. Ambassador, would you care to list the signs of - lessening of tension that you see?

A. Why, they come mostly in the form of things such as Stalin's statement here about collaboration, about a possible meeting of Heads of States, behavior of the Soviet diplomatic representatives around the world--they reflect certain things, and it seems to me that there has been in that evidences that they too think that the state of isolation of the Soviet Union from the West has gone to abnormal lengths. Remember that Soviet policy always goes in these fluctuations. I mean there is a time when they consider it to have gone too far in one direction and they pull it in a little bit. They never abandon one or the other of two alternative lines of policy. They always keep shifting the emphasis between them for some reason. I think that applies in this respect too.

And remember, what I'm talking about is so very very modest indeed. It's perhaps only something more approaching the tone of relationships that existed in the thirties. After all, in those days, as I say, there was a Soviet Government, yet Americans went to Moscow. They traveled there. They attended congresses there. They went to the theatre and went around. There were Soviet people in this country. And it wasn't quite as much of a hullabaloo about it as there would be today if you tried to do the same thing. And that is all I'm talking about--that I think it might be a good thing, and perhaps some of them do in Moscow, if you

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were to be able to get back to a basis where it wasn't always news if we had any sort of normal contact with each other.

Q. Why would it be a good thing?

A. Because after all if you're going to live in the same world with these people you may as well retain the best facilities you can for adjusting such differences as you can with them. And I don't see that anything is gained by the opposite myself. It's either one thing or another. If you were not really going to go to war and set out to destroy another people and if you're going to maintain diplomatic relations at all with them, then it seems to me that you might as well abide pretty much by the traditional forms and be mature about it. You know, all this sort of harsher type of personal propaganda and the things that are said on the propaganda level, all the asperities, they don't really count terribly in this. They are not worth the candle, it seems to me, half the time. I think that is recognized also on the other side.

Q. Are you fairly clear in your own mind, Ambassador Kennan, that we are not going to go to war with them?

A. I certainly hope not.

Q. Well, do you think we are?

A. Well, I will put it this way, I have never thought at any time that the Soviet leaders have wanted a third world war since World War II ended. I'm not saying that it isn't possible that one should develop or that the day might come when they would even feel that it would come through

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some initiative of theirs. But I will say this, I think if that day ever comes it will be a pass to which they have come reluctantly and the decision would be one which they would feel was the worst of all alternatives, the lesser evil. In other words, I see no reason for us to assume that they have been plotting an onslaught on the West a la Hitler, and I have never seen the reason to assume that.

But that statement standing alone can be a very misleading one. It does not mean that we could not place demands on them which would be impossible in their eyes and which they would rather fight than accept. It does not mean that demands could not be placed on us, which we would rather fight than accept. It doesn't mean that wars cannot develop out of very complicated and involved situations and predicaments in which both powers become entwined. All that can happen.

But all I can say is that if you were thinking of war coming because some men in Moscow sat down and said, now what we want to do is invade Europe and let's select the date and time for it, I must say that I think that is probably a distortion of the Soviet mentality. I have not in any case seen the evidence which would lead me to believe that that was the way they hoped it would come.

Now, again please don't misunderstand me. There is every evidence that they heartily wish us out of Europe in every way, shape or form. I have been told personally by Soviet figures. I remember one time a conversation with Ilya Ehrenberg in which he told me with some heat that no American had any right to be in France in any way, shape or form, that there was no good we could possibly do there

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and he could conceive of no legitimate reason of any American being in France. I think that reflects something quite deep in the Soviet psychology. We are in every way a thorn in their hair.

Any sort of freedom is a bad comparison for them. And we stiffen the Europeans, the Western Europeans, to resolves and purposes which are inconvenient, which cause anxieties in Moscow. I don't think we can possibly do anything else. They would like to see us out. What I'm talking about is whether they have sat down and decided that the best way to get us out is to launch an onslaught on the West. But I have never seen the evidence.

Q. Is it fair to say that they mean to take the world and if they can't get it without war they will get it with war?

A. No, I could certainly say the evidence doesn't speak for that sort of a formula. I think these people obviously like to have power and influence but they always think of power in relation to the responsibilities which it bears with it. They do not want unlimited power, if unlimited power means unlimited responsibility. AND I think those things are very carefully calculated. Sometimes, you know, when you say where they continue to to conquer the world it seems like asking someone like Al Capone how much money he would like to make. I doubt if he ever figured the top limit and I don't suppose the Soviet Government has placed a limit in their minds just how far they would like to see their decisive influence spread and how far they would not. This depends on circumstances. I think they bear in their minds something

of the traditional feeling of insecurity of all Russian rulers. I think that comes from a way, way back in the days of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy and earlier when their position was an exposed one, vis a vis, the Tartars and other enemies that they had. At any rate, it seems to me to go very deep into the psychology of governing figures in Russia and that that sense of insecurity always wants them to wish that the nearest major possible enemy were farther away than he is and that more and more territory between them and him might be freed of his influence and committed to their own.

Q. You do not think it is an inexorable dogma that capitalism and communism cannot exist together in the world?

A. That is part of the dogma, but mind you that is not to say that according to the dogma capitalism is going to fall because communism is going to stage a military onslaught upon it; on the contrary, capitalism bears in itself the seeds of its own destruction and the role of the armed forces of communism is a subsidiary one, as I understand it, in the promotion of world revolution. It has been likened to that of the midwife at the birth of the child. And the main agent is supposed to be the law of history which the Marxists claimed to understand and claim that the rest of us do not understand and which is going to carry this thing basically of its own accord.

Now, the wish can be fathered to the thought there any way you want to look at it, but that is the way it seems to me to be.

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Q. You mentioned the existence of the personal propaganda attacks. You know you figured prominently in these. What was your analysis of these propaganda attacks on yourself at the time, and do you think they will curb your effectiveness in any way when you get there?

A. No, I don't think they have any significance one way or the other. You know how totalitarian propaganda machines are. They work by rather primitive and elementary rules. One of those rules is that you never try to enlist hatred against abstractions. You always enlist hatred against individuals. And, therefore, in any country which is a main objective of your propaganda--or any regime, put it that way, in government, which is a main victim of your propaganda attack--you have to select certain public figures against whom such an attack is directed.

Now, for various reasons it so happened that if in 1947 you looked at the editorials in the Cominform press, Jim Forestal and myself figured as the two main devils on this side. We were called the--I have forgotten what--canaballistic hyenas or something of that sort. And after Forestal's death there was a time when I remained then as sort of the sole bearer then of this distinction. And when I went down into South America a couple of years ago the walls of Rio and for that matter most of the Brazilian cities were really covered. But there were hundreds and hundreds--everywhere you drove there were enormous black letters "To death with Kennan", and I was buried in effigy three times while I was there by processions of Communist students. They rather touchingly gave me a Christian burial with a white cross on top.

Well, all of those things are turned on like a faucet for the exigiencies of the moment. I came in handy, so to speak, and was picked up and used for this purpose. But propaganda is propaganda and business is business and I don't think that the two really meet. The leaders of the Soviet Government, I can assure you, do not distinguish among non-Communist Americans in the sense of saying, well, some of them are nice and some of them we like and others are not nice and we don't like them. As a matter of fact, the closer they are in their ideological pretensions to a proximity to the Communist Party the greater the resentment against them in real Communist circles for being false Communists and not true Communists. I think one cannot speak of liking it at all.

In other words, anyone who talks about people in Moscow people in the Politburo, liking this foreigner or that foreigner, this American or that Englishman, wipe that out because really that doesn't enter in. There is a question whether they respect him or not and whether they consider a serious person who it's worth talking to or not. But their whole ideology and training would rule out any such thing as an attitude of personal sympathy or attraction as between them and a bourgeois foreigner. So that none of us who know anything about them are ever expected to be liked in there. The question is whether we are respected, that is important, if you're going to deal with them. And the fact that you have been the butt of their propaganda does not necessarily mean that you're not respected. It may mean almost the contrary.

I remember that the first thing that Stalin is reported to have said when he met von Ribbentrop for the first time--he is reported to have grinned broadly and said, "Well, we certainly did cuss each other out, didn't we?" And he thought it was a grand joke. There is a very distinct ability on the part of these people to turn on the propaganda heat and remain utterly unmoved emotionally underneath it. In other words, they are quite cynical about their own propaganda. They don't really take it seriously themselves and I don't think they expect other people to take it seriously either.

Q. Didn't they make their last attack on you after the agrément had been returned?

A. Look, that was an attack, as I recall it, by the Polish Radio and it was a rehash of material that appeared about three years ago or in the book either of Annabelle Bucar or of Parker, who was this English correspondent who went over in Moscow, and that has been sort of standard radio material for a long, long time. And my guess would be that the Polish Radio was a little behind on its instructions from Moscow and kept on running the stuff a couple of days beyond the deadline and it was picked up by somebody and was passed out here as some more, but it was really just more of the same.

Q. Mr. Ambassador, I have heard it suggested that in order to maintain some of the controls and restrictions which they do maintain quite apart from the Communism involvement, the Russians need to have an outside enemy,

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that it would be impossible for them really to engage in a major relaxation of tensions, stop beating somebody over the head with propaganda, because if they did they couldn't justify their own existence internally. In a somewhat similar way, if we were to engage in a great relaxation of tension, it would be darn hard to get Congressional approval and money to carry on an armament program. Where do you see that kind of a problem fitting into this?

A. Well, I must be very careful about this phrase of "relaxation of tensions". During the war the Soviet Government was careful, as I recall it, on the overt propaganda level--that is, written propaganda, propaganda of the outside world--not to say things offensive about the United States. I mean they were quite restrained about that. Nevertheless, even during the war they took measures not to let their own people get too carried away with the suggestion that we Americans might not be so bad after all. We were quite shocked, some of us, during the war and painfully surprised to find agitators on the Moscow riverboats and in the parks feeding out a really very ugly anti-American line still during the war when the press wasn't saying it at all. You see, this couldn't be picked up and quoted. I do think you're quite right, the outside world, the non-Communist outside world in general, will continue in any circumstances to be held up to the Soviet Government as a wicked and menacing thing which justified the maintenance of the dictatorship internally.

Remember that in his book on "The Problems of Leninism, Stalin said that "The instruments of oppression in our

state"---meaning primarily the secret police, the whole dictatorship, the nature of the government---"are necessitated by two things: (1) the continued existence in Russia of the remnants of capitalism, and (2) the existence of the capitalist encirclement".

Sometime around 1930, maybe it was as late as '32 or '33, he also stated officially that the remnants of capitalism in Russia had been destroyed. This left the capitalist encirclement theoretically as the only justification for the maintenance of the dictatorship for the proletariat in Russia. And unquestionably, that is an ideological necessity and will be continued in the internal propaganda of the government.

But that does not mean that there cannot be a somewhat greater give and take on the overt diplomatic level. It's not nice, it's not comfortable, it's not easy for people to live in acountry where the inhabitants are constantly being told that they are a so-and-so and that the country is a menace to them and all that. But, as I say, it has been done, and if we are going to have relations at all, why, it's one of the things you have to do.

Q. Mr. Ambassador, since you mentioned Problems of Leninism and early you discounted the role of military forces in Soviet thinking, isn't it also true that in Problems of Leninism Stalin quotes Lenin to the effect that the continued existence of capitalism and the Soviet state is impossible and that one or the other will triumph and before that triumph comes there willl be a series of the most frightful clashes?

A. That's right but remember a series, and also remember that the basic tenet was that these clashes initially will come as the contradictions when the capitalist camp catches up with it and conflicts develop between the major capitalist powers. In fact, traditionally and at the time when Stalin made those statements Lenin did, the Anglo-American conflict was regarded as the basic one which would finally tear the guts out of the strength of the capitalist world. Whether that continues today, I can't tell you. But all I can say is it seems to me the traditional pattern of thought there ideologically is rather this, capitalism represents a conglomeration of political entities which are in varied states of advancement; that is, the development of capitalism has been a very uneven one, so that you have some countries backward, some countries advanced, and so forth.

This means that they will fall out among themselves over the problems of imperialism. There will be no real unity among them and they will gradually weaken themselves. And at that time there will be uprisings here and therein the world. The Proletariat will take over. The Proletariat of course then will develop rapidly its armed strength and will institute dictatorships for as long as it is necessary, as long as there continues to be a capitalist element in the world, and force will of course play a part and a very important part, you're quite right. I'm not saying for a moment these people ignore the meaning or value or importance

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of military force. I was only referring here, in answer to this question as to how they would expect that force to be used, and I would suggest that the pattern that was evident at the time of the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact of Germany fighting the West and the Soviet Union holding its forces intact for a day when, as we must presume it was hoped, the West and the Germans would have exhausted each other mutually that that was rather in the pattern of Soviet thinking as the best and most economical way to advance the world revolution.

Q. Assuming that this relaxation and this return to politeness and exchanges between Soviet and non-Soviet governments is achieved, what next? What comes out of the politeness?

A. Well, you know I think if you were to ask me, can I look sort of down the tube of our problems that we have today with the Soviet Union and see to the end of it and see the answers and the way these problems might be solved, I would have to tell you quite frankly no, as things stand today there are problems which in present circumstances I do not see the answers to, as between ourselves and them.

Other problems seem to me to be theoretically susceptible of solution, that is to have in them elements which one day or another we ought to be able to combine in such a way that we could have solutions. But the fact that you cannot always see the answers to problems at any given point in time does not mean, I think, we must be careful to note this, that such answers cannot exist. None of us can foresee the development of the world situation with any

...t a happy solution, but it's better than another
therefore, when you talk about solutions, I don't
...w what you mean. I don't think there is any
...lution, for example, for the German problem. I
...the Germans are a problem to themselves as well as to
...body else and they are going to continue to be that for
...long time and for every one who has to deal with them
because they are a very dual nation. They have great
streaks of good in them and great streaks of weakness. As
Sigmund Freud once said, "a lot of them were baptized very
late and very badly", and I have never forgotten that
statement.

Q. Mr. Kennan, how well do you speak Russian?

A. Oh, let us say, adequately to conduct a diplomatic
conversation.

Q. Without an interpreter?

A. Yes.

Q. Could you carry on a discussion like this in Russia
with newspaper men?

A. Yes, indeed, yes, I could. I would not express
myself, I think, as comfortably as I can in English; that
is I would have to watch it all and it probably wouldn't be
quite as well said or at least it would be worse said--put
it that way--but at any rate I can do it and I think as
foreigners go I know the language reasonably well. After
all, I went to Russia first as an interpreter, let's see,
19 years ago.

Q. Mr. Kennan, when you said that the amount of
Russian vituperation has very little at least to do with

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everybody concerned, I'm afraid, ourselves and the Soviet leaders—and the peoples of Western Europe above all. And I cannot think that it could be a gain.

Now, when you say "solutions", I would say that if we can live through these next some ten or fifteen years and not have such a third world conflagration, I personally, to the extent that I have had any part in bringing about that state of affairs, will be satisfied. In other words, if it's still possible for our kids to go out and play baseball at this time of the year and live together in this country the way that it does today, at least no worse let us say than it does today, I think a great deal will have been achieved. Because the situation that has arisen as a result of World War II has been temporarily one of immense difficulty and really tremendous precariousness and dangerousness, and that quite aside from problems of the good will or the ill will of people.

The fact that we were both lured with our--if you can put it that way--or drawn with our own military forces into this explosive territory of Germany right in the heart of Europe and into the joint occupation of great cities like Vienna, those were, considering the differing backgrounds of psychology and the different ways in which we approach this thing, the Russians and ourselves, those were situations of really tremendous delicacy and dangerousness. You saw it come to the surface in the Berlin blockade and really when you look back on it it's rather a wonder that we have been able to do as well as we have been able to do and that these quadripartite controls can still tour the streets of Vienna together and somehow the city lives.

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their feelings and then later you were saying bettering the relations as such would be in essence less vituperation, does that mean it doesn't really make very much difference, there is really no more chance or no less chance of war or any serious trouble like in Korea or something at this time that you would call better relations?

A Put it this way, I would say their nerves are colder in this respect than ours are and what worries me about the sort of shrill tone of mutual exchanges these days is the effects on our own people here rather than on the other side. Because I think the Soviet leaders are used to living in the rough and tumble of a very brutal propaganda world. And it doesn't affect them, it doesn't affect them so much.

Q. It wouldn't mean they were more or less ready to do something?

A. I think that is absolutely correct.

Q. When you were listing the reasons which you saw which indicated a lessening of tension, one you mentioned was the behavior of Soviet diplomats around the world. Do you have any specific instances in mind?

A. No, I don't. You just get a general impression. Things are said here and there. You get it, as I said, in Stalin's statement here and frankly I can't remember but I know I have read things after I have been away from government for a year and a half and all I know is what I have read in the newspapers, but I have read several things recently which seem to me rather evidence of it, among them the Economic

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Congress, that there they would like to create the impression on the other side that things were not quite this bad.

Q. Do you expect to create that impression on our side, in the sense that once there do you think you would be able to lunch with a few more Soviet officials on your initiative than has been done up to the present time?

A. I have no idea, really. All I can say is that I am old fashioned in this respect and like to see the diplomatic amenities observed and not too closely connected with emotions. And we will see what happens. I just don't know. I wouldn't be too optimistic along those lines and it may be possible, despite what I have said here, that something I have done has really gotten under somebody's skin and maybe I will be treated coldly--I don't know--more than other people.

Q. Is there enough substance to the Soviet relaxation to warrant any change in our policy that it's advisable to exploit it?

A. No, I don't think any change in policy at all. I am only speaking really here about the outward amenities. Look, a number of people have come to me in the last couple years, friends that I have had or people that I have met here and there, and said "We would like to make a trip to Moscow in one way or another. Is it possible to go over there now in one capacity or another, as students or professors and people like that?" And I have had to tell them, "You have to watch your step today or this will be misinterpreted. People say how come he is going over there and who invited him and did he suggest it and what were his motives", and

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that just seems to me unfortunate. You know, I think we are too nervous about this. I saw hundreds of Americans troop in and out of the Soviet Union in the twenties and the thirties and my experience was that fully 97 or 98 percent of those people were extraordinarily good at orientating themselves and not becoming victims to Soviet propaganda.

On the other hand, usually their impressions of the Soviet Union I thought were very true ones and helped them to avoid extremes of thoughts on both sides and, therefore, I'm not afraid in my mind of seeing Americans exposed to this thing and I would like to see a great cultural exchange. It did exist in the old days. Some of it existed. It wasn't all bad. I'd like to see all forms of cultural interchange revived, if it were possible. After all, life has got to go on. Politics is politics, but there are other things in life besides politics, and I think we ought to encourage the Soviet Government gradually to come to that point.

Q. There is one rather practical thing--I don't know whether you have any council to give on it--up at the Capitol in the press galleries it is always buzzing as to whether the Tass representative should be thrown out. Some Congressmen and Senators have been extremely critical of our Standing Committee for not doing that. I wondered whether you thought it would be helpful or unhelpful if that were done.

A. You know, it's a problem on which you people have thought more than I have. I would hate to expose myself on that but I would think that, considering the facilities the Soviet Government has for obtaining information in this country, that it doesn't make an awful lot of difference whether

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Larry Todd sits up there or not. And it's a question how it makes you people feel. I mean, as far as any damage being done by Tass being here, I would say no. And I really feel that the greater the openness we can have the better. I don't think we have as many secrets as we think we have. And we can afford one thing which they over there so far have not been able to afford, and that is a certain relaxation about these things and a freedom from having to fuss about little things. I should think that perhaps this fell into that category. But that is an offhand impression and I'm not fully sure that I understand all that is at stake in the position of Larry Todd.

Q. If your argument follows, Sir, that why did our State Department restrict the Russian envoys over here---

A. That was a straight case of retaliation.

Q. Well, our boys don't do so well. They are not invited around the press galleries in Moscow.

A. That is why I speak with some hesitation here because Idon't know just what facilities you fellows are talking about. I suppose overtly they do go to the sessions of the Supreme Soviet over there and they say that is comparable to the Congressional Press Gallery and I realize the comparison is a very slim one, but I don't know where you would find an adequate one.

Q. It's not a question of their getting information because they belong to the press gallery. It goes deeper. My recollection is that the State Department didn't want us to do it for reasons quite apart from what extra information they might get from sitting here or sitting there.

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A. I'm glad to see the State Department didn't want you to do it because I didn't know what they had wanted. I can't comment on that. I never discussed it really with anybody here as far as the Department's views on it are concerned. What I have given you is simply a personal opinion. That is, unless there are some pretty solid reasons for doing it, I would think offhand that probably it's not worth doing.

Q. What do you think of the attitude of the people here who think this whole patient line that you have been expounding here is just too slow and will defeat us in the end and that we ought to make a really tremendous and dramatic propaganda drive that the Russian people should be directly separated from the Kremlin, to really get tough with China and do underground things, and so on?

A. Well, I don't know. Sir Francis Drake said one time in a wonderful phrase, "It is not in the undertaking but in the finishing of a project that there lies the full glory." And if I could see the end of all these things as well as some people see the beginnings of them, I might feel differently about it.

Q. But you can't see the end of the other line either.

A. No, that's true. But I don't see the same amount of involvement on the other line. What I'm driving at is this, in the first place what you're talking about, I suppose, is the overthrow of the Soviet Government by direct propaganda and whatever means of political warfare we could develop.

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In the first place, I do not think that that is consistent with the maintenance of diplomatic relations. If you want to declare first a state of outright hostility and then not fight on the military plane but fight on this plane, that is at least a more clear thing.

In the first place, I find it difficult to reconcile with diplomatic relations. But beyond that, I would just point out these things, I don't think any population today which is, so to speak, in the hands of a totalitarian regime which has internal unity and has a monopoly over the weapons, the means of communication, and the means of transportation, I do not think that any such population can revolt successfully against such a regime. I think that has been perhaps one of the new political realities of our time that has been brought into existence by the state of weapons and you can't really expect people to do that. They have nothing to rise up with. Their pitchforks are no good to them. They have no facilities for organizing, no facilities for assemblying, and that possibility doesn't exist, so that the people who are driving into that thing I think are driving into an empty hole. I mean they are never going to get anywhere.

And, secondly, I think, as most of you people know from what I have written—and again I'm giving you a personal view—I have great misgivings about any form of drastic and major interference by one power in the internal affairs of another power because I think that if you go in like that to unseat a government you place yourself under the

moral obligation to have in your pocket something with which to replace it, if you succeed. And I don't think that that is a responsibility that I would like to see any of us Americans have for Russia and the Soviet Union. I have great sympathy, and I think as much as anybody in this country, for the Russian people and great respect for many qualities that they have in them. And I think we do have reason to hope that things will not always be as difficult as they are today, that some day there will be changes in this type of regime as there have been changes in every other regime in world history.

And I hope eventually we will see a turn to the type of progress which I think was being made in Russia at a very rapid rate between the freedom of the serfs in 1865 and the outbreak of the revolution. But I think all that has got to come through the efforts of the Russian people themselves and if another great country gets in it and tries to bring it about and tries to tell people what to do, it's going to confuse that whole issue and perhaps to the detriment of the very things which we would like to see in Russia. I think often the interest of a foreign country, put it this way, the too zealous and interventionist interest in a foreign country in political matters in another country is the kiss of death to the very things that it wishes to favor and all of this seems to me to be an area replete with gre danger. There is also the question as to how clos brings you to war.

Q. Ambassador, would you envisage that if we were to be able to regain a period of relaxation such as you hope for, that we would then relax the present restrictions on the export of strategic materials to the Soviet Union and, therefore, permit the Soviet Union in such a period of relaxation to strengthen its military economic potential? After all, the 1930's, to which you look back with such nostalgia, were precisely the period in which the Soviet economic machine was built up to give it the economic potential that it has today, at least the foundation for it.

A. Well, I can't comment on that as a problem of future policy, but I only say this, that when you set out to hold down or retard, say, the military potential of another country you set out to hold down its entire economy really because the two things cannot any longer be separated. I mean you can't say that there isa military industry and a military strength as distinct from the entire strength of the economy;and undertakings of that sort, if they have any possibilities for success, have them only when you do them in a great way.

This is, I think, this problem of East-West trade and that sort of thing is one of the most difficult problems that I have ever encountered in my own experience and again I don't think there are any satisfactory answers to it. The answers, at any rate, are not nearly as simple as people would give the impression that they are, who feel very strongly about this problem. And beyond that I cannot comment on your question. I don't know what would come in respect to policy there. It is not a problem just for us. It's a problem also in which our allies are involved and I couldn't really attempt to speculate on it.

Q. Do I understand, just to get clear in my own mind, all you're really talking about in this is a relaxation of barking at each other, or propaganda?

A. Yes. Look, I'm going out there to assume a diplomatic job. I would hope that the atmosphere in which that job can be done, whatever the job may amount to, may be as mature and as normal and relaxed as possible. That is really all that I'm saying.

Q. Do you expect the Russians, before he end of the year, to fulfill the relevant provisions of the Chinese-Soviet Alliance regarding the lay-away at Darien and Port Arthur?

A. You mean by getting out of those places?

Q. Yes.

A. It's a hard question to answer yes or no because of the fact that the device of--I don't know what to call it--puppet forces is too strong, but concealed forms of influence is a very well established one in that particular part of the world. I would think that the letter of the agreement would be complied with but I would be surprised if it turned out that Soviet influence was no longer powerful in controlling, let us say, the docks at Darien or the facilities.

Q. How long will you be in town?

A. About two days, the rest of today and two more days.

MR. McDERMOTT: May I remind everybody that the only thing that can be attributed to Mr. Kennan is the typed statement which is being issued in the press room.

Adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

M.J. McDermott

VRVoce